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HAFTARAH FOR THE OFF-KEY SINGER

LOTTIE HOCHBERG

Since her senior year at Brooklyn College, where she was a music major, Lottie Hochberg has been doing research on the multifaceted problem of off-key singing and has been giving remedial ear training to musically-deficient people, including Bar Mitzvah students. This article is a skeletal preview of a book well in progress.

"If only the floor under me had opened so that I could go through it, it would have spared me the torture of having to chant my Bar Mitzvah Haftarah!" Sol, an off-key singer, at the age of 22 still vividly remembered the cold sweat chilling his body on that hot July Shabbat (before his synagogue was air-conditioned).

"Each lesson with the rabbi was an ordeal for both of us. The rabbi, realizing that the problem was musical, eventually enlisted the cantor's help. The cantor at least called to my attention the fact that the notes moved up and down. But no matter how I tried to follow his melody my chanting never got to sound right. When my grandfather periodically asked to hear me chant, instead of his face brightening up with pleasure and approval, his eyes registered disappointment!"

The Bar Mitzvah was not originally given the privilege of chanting the Haftarah in order to torment him when he comes of age. Learning the Haftarah cantillation is a very important part of his rightful Jewish musical heritage. The period of training should be one of pleasurable growth. And chanting the Haftarah at the synagogue service should be a highpoint in the life of every Bar Mitzvah. Therefore looking into the problem of off-key singing and helping the musically deficient student becomes imperative for us.

An infant's first musical ear training comes from his or her mother's lullabies. The family's singing of Z'mirot on *Shabbat* also contributes considerably to a child's musical development. The infant's first practice comes during the babbling period when he tries to imitate the speech sounds that he hears from his elders. If, as speech develops, the child learns to lower his pitch at the end of a statement, and raise his pitch when asking a question (except one that starts with "how," "what," "when," "where," or "why"), then he has the basic musical development necessary for learning to sing correctly. Along the way, if he hears singing at home, he experiments by singing short melodic motives to himself and when he is among people with whom he feels comfortable. Singing with phonograph records (or tapes), radio, or television is nowhere near as

effective as singing in the presence of live, loving humans, because the mechanical objects are unable to pat the child on the shoulder and tell him how well he is singing or how good he sounds, or suggest that he repeat what he has sung and the song will sound better.

Some definitions are in order. The word *monotone* means one tone. Related to singing, it refers to a person who sings strictly on one tone. Inasmuch as speech sounds are actually composed of overtones in various parts of the tonal range, called *formants*, I only a person who in his early infancy was unable to hear speech sounds enough to be able to imitate them when babbling, and therefore could not learn to speak, may be considered *tone deaf*. Anyone who has learned to speak expressively, therefore cannot rightly be called a 'monotone' or 'tone deaf.'

Language development and musical development are highly correlated. We use the same breathing muscles and lungs, some vocal cords and other muscles for speaking and singing. Both have rhythm but the rhythm in singing is usually more prominent than the rhythm in speech. In both speaking and singing there is tonal range and inflection. The total range in speech is shorter than in singing. While in speech, pitch changes are so small and gradual that they are hardly noticed by someone with an untrained ear, in singing there are definite pitch changes in many variations which form melodies.

In off-key singing one or more of several aspects of correct singing may go wrong. The individual may mismatch when singing with vocal or instrumental support. With his immature high-pitched voice he may not be able to match his teacher's mature deeper voice because hearing the two different registers may confuse him. He may be able to match initial tones and in fact follow well when singing with support. But when singing without support he may go astray, either by singing the wrong notes and intervals in the right direction, or sometimes by changing the direction in a melody. He may sing in the right direction but may slightly diminish or augment intervals, showing that he does not feel the relatedness of the tones in a melodic motive. He may, for the most part, sing correctly, but somewhere along the way change an interval, and as a result modulate to another key.

The off-key singer may or may not hear himself go off, he may say he has no memory for music. He most likely considers himself the world's worst singer. From having heard adverse criticism about his singing all of his life he is sure that he has a horrible voice, but this is often not the case.

There is no unmusical child. The music must be drawn out from within him.

What are some of the causes of off-key singing? If a small child is ever told (especially repeatedly) to stop singing and does, he also tends to stop listening to music. Then whatever musical discrimination he has developed up to that time begins to deteriorate from nonuse.² Some children have above-normal or super-sensitive hearing and are confused because they hear more in musical tones than those with so-called normal hearing. In fact, if the music be only moderately loud, untrained people with super-sensitive hearing may hear a jumble of sound.³ Inasmuch as our ears become attuned to the instrument we hear mostly, an out-of-tune piano may be a cause of off-key singing. Many children come from homes where all singing is loud. Such people usually say, "If it isn't loud it isn't singing." Any forcing, whether habitual or for effect, may cause a singer to go off pitch.⁴ Upper-chest breathing may result in a hoarse, raspy, and inflexible voice which is difficult to control. Insufficient breath support often causes the pitch to drop.⁵

To call a child whose singing is defective a 'monotone' or to tell him that he is 'tone deaf' is not only false but also harmful. Many people, both children and adults, do not understand the intense emotional sensitivity of a young child. When negatively criticized he develops an "I'm no good" attitude which spreads to other areas of living and learning. A child who thus becomes apprehensive about himself as a human being and about his ability to learn usually has great difficulty allowing himself to sing freely, right or wrong. He may breathe as if he's being chased by a monster, may have poor posture, or may try to sing with his mouth almost closed.

What does training the off-key singer for Bar Mitzvah involve?

He should be given the opportunity to talk about his singing experience. If he has been criticized he should ventilate his feelings about the criticism. He need to be shown how he has been wronged, even though his critics meant no harm. He needs to be treated with patience and understanding, an overdose of honest compliments, reassurances, and encouragement. He needs to be shown truthfully, that there is much about his singing that is right, even before he starts training. For instance, if his voice sounds pleasant (and only if it really does), if he matched a given first tone, or if his direction was right, he should be told about it. And he should be told that these are very important aspects of correct singing. Gradually his self-confidence will be built up.

In addition, the training involves replacing the missing links in his musical development. For example, he may have to learn the difference between up and down; to feel the difference between larger and smaller melodic intervals; and the difference between sameness and difference. He must develop good communication between his 'headquarters' and vocal cords and breathing mechanism in order to match tones, to sing from one tone to the next, and to phrase properly. Development of auditory imagery — the ability to hear or image music mentally when it is not present physically — in this case at least the tropal motives, is important, especially because the Bar Mitzvah chants his Haftarah without accompaniment. To accomplish all this, remedial ear training should be geared to improving attention and concentration.

This article is being written in terms of teaching individual students. If, however, you have two or more (up to about ten) musically deficient Bar or Bat Mitzvah candidates in training at the same time, if they can be brought up to the same level of training, they will benefit from working together as a group, even though each may have a different combination of singing problems. There are several advantages. They can see that they aren't the only ones who have difficulty singing and they have a ready, sympathetic audience. They often find that hearing other people's mistakes is easier than hearing their own and this sharpens their attention and musical listening. They tend to identify in a positive way with other students who succeed.

The teacher should prepare himself with information on musical acoustics, physiology of hearing and hearing problems; the nature of attention, concentration, and listening; physical handicaps which may affect speech and hearing; breathing and breathing problems; posture and relaxation; vocalization and voice problems; and of course, a knowledge of how to teach Haftarah cantillation in such a way that even though he may encounter difficulty, the experience will be enjoyable and fulfilling for both teacher and student.

As soon as a bright youngster who feels free enough to ask questions, asks, "You've been telling me to listen; what am I supposed to listen to or hear?" you know that in addition to knowing trop you must have at your finger tips information on musical acoustics.

A twelve-year-old usually has some interest in science. To reinforce this interest with a review of definitions of sound, noise, tone, and other pertinent facts will help him feel that he's on familiar territory, will give him a satisfying feeling of growth, will

motivate him to sing, and will stimulate musical thinking. A good way to start is to ask him questions which will draw out from him as much musical knowledge as you think he might have. For instance, he should know that the aspect of nature that both of you are 'dealing with' is *sound*, and he should know at least part of its definition. Do not give him the answer you seek or let him get away with "I don't know." Calmly but firmly tell him that you wouldn't ask him any question he couldn't answer. Give him time and encouragement to think. Of course he should be complimented for each of his contributions to your discussions.

Your student should also know the two main types of sound we hear — *noise* and *tone*. An easy way to demonstrate production of sound by vibrations is to pluck a taut rubber band. There are oscillograph tracings of sound waves which show the irregularity of vibrations of noise and the regularity or periodicity of the waves that produce tone.⁶ The same source shows that soft tones are simpler and therefore easier to hear than loud tones. Especially because your student may have super-sensitive hearing, you should play and have him sing softly at the beginning of training. You might suggest to all of your students that when they listen to music on the radio, television, or whatever, they should have the music tuned softly and they will hear it much more clearly than if it were loud.

You do not have to discuss the physiology of hearing with your student. The only aspect of hearing that you should talk about, however, is the danger of developing a hearing loss as a result of being close to loud sounds such as exploding fire crackers or listening to rock music for several hours at a time.⁷ Sixteen-year-old rock fans have begun to show a reduction in hearing acuity equivalent to that of 65-year-old people. Now that there are "junior discotheques," where invariably the music is as loud as that of a rock band (115 decibels), we must warn our students and their parents of the potentiality of developing not only a hearing loss but also other physical ailments such as high blood pressure and heart disease from hearing the noise.⁸ They may forget our advice when the rhythm and bright lights beckon. But we will know that we have done our duty.

YOU should know as much as possible about the physiology of hearing and hearing pathology for a variety of reasons. You may have to prove to a student that he isn't deaf. For example, here is what happened to one boy. There were times in his early childhood when his mother would call him in from play. Being deeply en-

grossed in the game with his friends, and wanting to finish it, he would go right on playing without responding to his mother. The next thing he heard was, "Louis, you must be deaf!" This happened often enough for him to become convinced that he WAS DEAF, and then he began to think, "Why bother listening?" Louis was so positively convinced by his mother that he was deaf that when he was in the first grade in elementary school and a group hearing test was administered to his class, he copied the answers from the boy sitting in front of him. There is no doubt that other unresponsive children have been repeatedly and convincingly told by their parents that they were deaf.

You may one day have to calm a student who has become disturbed by the startling discovery that he hears two different pitches — one in one ear and another pitch in his other ear, when only one tone has been sounded. This anomaly is known as ***diplacusis*** or double hearing. It may occur because of an upper respiratory infection and disappear when the infection is healed.⁹ But there are other types of ***diplacusis***, one of which may be due to a brain tumor. Therefore, should the double hearing last much longer than your student's cold, an examination by an ear specialist is in order.

A partial hearing loss should be no deterrent to learning to sing correctly, as long as you speak or sing loudly enough for this student to hear you. In fact people who wear hearing aids have learned to sing well.

But a hearing loss, other physical handicaps, emotional problems, or precociousness may affect a child's ability to pay attention. Some very bright children stop listening at a very early age. Ruben, a brilliant child, showed good musical discrimination when he listened. But he didn't always listen. Asked whether he pays attention to his teacher in school, he said, "No. I don't like her so why should I listen to her?" Actually, there is so little taught and so much review in the lowest grades in elementary school that a precocious child doesn't have to pay attention all the time. He will learn the necessary material with very little attention.

All of us, at one time or other, have anticipated test questions. Some people have a real knack for anticipation, but in musical discrimination it is an important source of error.¹⁰ Anticipators may hear and sing a melody accurately. But because they don't listen intently, they don't always judge tonal direction correctly. Guessing is easier than listening because listening requires more effort than guessing. They and others who are not anticipators, may observe the movement of their teacher's face when they are supposedly lis-

tening for direction. Therefore, the teacher must train himself not to move his facial muscles or head in the direction of the tones. A few books that have a page or two of discussion and suggestions for helping children who sing off-key suggest allowing the child to move an arm with the melody, so that if the direction is up the arm will move upward, etc. But a child who is old enough to anticipate will move his arm or head in the direction he THINKS the melody is going, which is not necessarily the right direction.

We must be careful not to pass judgment when a student has sung something before he himself judges his own singing. When a student sings correctly, because of his insecurity, he may occasionally think that he went off. If he did go off, the student must hear his mistakes accurately in order to correct his singing.

Recording the student's voice during lessons is inadvisable for two reasons. First, the off-key singer may come to you believing that his voice sounds bad, and because tape recorders usually distort the voice, he will "be sure" that all of his critics have been right. Second, your student must get into the habit of listening to himself so that he becomes able to hear himself WHILE SINGING. If he knows that he can listen to a tape later he won't bother listening while he's singing during the taping.

There is another aspect of listening. When you sing a two-syllable word such as אָפּ , on one tone, your student may hear each syllable on a different tone. He may say that the tone of אָ was higher than the tone of פּ , or vice versa. Either answer may be interpreted as indicating very keen hearing. The reason he has heard two tones, however, is that he listened to the speech formants instead of the fundamental of the sung tone. The ee of אָ has a higher formant than the u of פּ . If he heard אָ -higher than פּ , he at least heard that the two formants were different. He should be told that he listened to the speech sounds rather than to the fundamental (the definition of which he should already have learned) of the sung tone. This happens when a student feels tonally insecure, yet is very much interested in and therefore listens only to the words of songs he sings. Practice can overcome this wrong listening habit.

Listening can be improved in several ways. After you have discussed the difference between noise and tone, possibly at the second lesson, you might ask him to write a list of tonal sounds he hears during the week, such as automobile horns, factory sirens, door chimes, etc. In order to be sure that he understands the assign-

ment, ask him for the example. In case of doubt as to whether a sound be noisy or tonal, he may also write a 'doubtful' list. One yeshivah student brought in a list of forty tonal sounds. His Bar Mitzvah teacher began to hear an improvement in his cantillation within two weeks.

To improve directional discrimination you will play or sing two tones, starting with possibly a perfect fifth. Decrease the interval size gradually and include perfect primes. Your student should always sing the tones you have played or sung. Even if he doesn't match he will invariably sing in the right direction. This will give him an opportunity to feel kinesthetically what is happening in his throat and to hear whether he has sung up, down, or same. If his answer be wrong, there is a possibility that he anticipated your tonal direction rather than listen to either you or himself. He may find it emotionally painful to listen to himself if he has experienced much harsh criticism. After he has sung correctly or given a correct answer, always remember to tell him how musical or smart he is. This will be balm for his insecurity. Never reprimand a student for his mistakes. Be sure to let him know that his errors will actually help him by making him more musically alert.

The increased effort that intense listening requires may bring on fatigue, mental blocking, and/or tension. A well-timed humorous anecdote will delay the onset of fatigue and break the mental blocking. The laughter will serve to relax your student much more easily than simply telling him to relax. Therefore, never feel guilty about taking the time for a brief story."

Singing requires a higher degree of attention than only listening, and writing requires a still higher degree of attention than singing. If your student hasn't yet learned musical notation, he will be very happy when you teach it to him. His learning of the Haftarah cantillation will be more thorough if he himself writes (from dictation) the notation for each new tropal motive, as well as the variations of the cantillation clauses, than if you do it for him. He will thus provide himself with visual pictures of the cantillation. At the beginning slower tropal motives, as in the *Silluq* clause, will be easier for him to write and learn to sing than faster ones.

Educators have found that the more sense modalities we involve in teaching, the more effective is the instruction. Remedial ear training for off-key singers, as outlined above, activates the auditory, kinesthetic, and visual senses. Combined with understanding, patience, and persistence on the part of the teacher, student, and

parents, the method leads to a spiritually and musically enriching Bar or Bat Mitzvah Haftarah cantillation.

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BAR/BAT MITZVAH INSTRUCTION: A NEW APPROACH

MARTIN LEUBITZ

Martin Leubitz is a graduate of the Cantors Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and is the Hazzan of Congregation Beth Am of Cleveland, Ohio.

Perhaps one of the greatest enemies of education, whether it be secular or religious in nature, is that of boredom stemming from either method or content, or both.

In the area of religious instruction, and more specifically, in the study of skills necessary for Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the many congregational schools have seen the "destruction" which this enemy has left in its path, namely, lack of motivation, lack of a complete education, and finally, the souring of what should be a most successful and meaningful experience in the life of the youngster and his/her family.

It is with this in mind that I am exploring a new avenue of Bar/Bat Mitzvah instruction. As many are aware, the micro-processors or mini-computers are popular today, showing up in many homes as well as in small business. Students are geared towards this type of stimulus, being constantly involved with computer-games and computer-assisted learning in the public schools. The idea of using computers in testing and in standardizing curriculum is nothing new. However, using a computer to teach is relatively new and exciting. I hasten to add that by no means can, or should, a computer be substituted for the one-to-one contact of teacher to student. This "people contact" is an absolute must. It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss this point, and, further, I feel that educators are in agreement with it already.

What then can the computer do that I, as a Hazzan, cannot do? After all, it knows nothing other than what it is programmed to know! To answer this question completely requires that we examine the capabilities of one of these little machines. Although there are many different mini-computers on the market today, I will confine my remarks to the APPLE II computer. This is because of the very nature of the task that I expected it to be able to do.

The APPLE II computer has both graphics and tone-capabilities. This means that it is capable of projecting an image (anything I program) on a television screen. It will keep that image on the screen for as long as I wish. That image can also be stored in

memory to be recalled at any time in the future. It will display the image either in black-and-white or in color, depending on whether or not we are using a color television. The other, and probably more important to a Hazzan, is the APPLE's capability of producing (electronically) any note of the scale in a range of approximately four octaves. Once again, the tones are not produced by a recording tape. Each tone must be given to the computer, one at a time, giving both the frequency and duration of the sound to be made. There is a certain amount of preparation and tedious work involved, but the final product is more than worth the time spent. Each note then is placed in the memory of the computer by half-steps, thus converting each chromatic to a number. In addition, we can use the value of 255 as that of the duration of one whole-note. Then, by simple arithmetic, we can divide and sub-divide to have our "electronic wizard" able to "sing" rhythmically.

Let us leave the technical aspects for a moment, and turn to the area of Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutoring. As we all know, there is a certain procedure for learning the Haftarah. As a Hazzan, I insist that the Ta'amei *Ha'mikra* be mastered before the individual student and I proceed with his/her portion. In addition to having the youngster become familiar with the tradition of the tropes, we are concerned with holding that child's interest in the synagogue. We are desperately looking for ways in which we can kindle a love for the synagogue which will manifest itself by the student's active involvement in conducting services and returning after the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to celebrate the anniversary of the event by chanting the same Haftarah. It is especially meaningful for the student to be able to chant another Haftarah, applying his skills with the tropes to a different portion.

One more area needs to be focused on in the area of pedagogy within any school. This is the problem of the slow learner. The more repetition this student can have, the more secure her or she will be when asked to stand before family and friends and conduct the various portions of the service.

Finally, let us not forget that we can make this enjoyable. The old "honey versus vinegar" adage still holds true today. What is needed, I feel, is perhaps for us to explore the different brands of "honey" on the market!

And this is where the APPLE II enters!! I am finding that it is not only efficient from the standpoint of accuracy, but it has a certain quality which is intriguing to both student and adult. It provides immediate reward and immediate correction of errors. It is

patient and provides hours of learning and enjoyment. It is motivation!

The reader must keep in mind that although my area of work at the present time is confined to that of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, other areas of Jewish study are being explored by the Institute for Computers in Jewish Life, headed by Dr. Samuel Spero in Chicago. Hopefully there will be a network of people in synagogues interacting with computer programs applicable for the Jewish Day School and/or congregational school.

The computer can be used in a classroom, having one student at a time come up before the class and respond to the computer, or it can be used privately by the student at his/or convenience. For the present I am working with the latter, having my students schedule time during the week to use it.

What actually transpires in this "dialogue" between student and computer? In the case of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah program, the student is first asked for his student number and individual password. The student number helps me to control the use of the computer. (I may want to limit its use to one group, or I might, want to know how a particular student fared.) I can then go to the computer and determine how a student scored with a certain part of the program. Next, the student is shown a list of the trope, each having its own identifying number. The computer asks the student, "How many tropes would you like to see?" The tropes can be requested in any order, and as often as desired. For example if a student would like to hear the first eight or ten tropes of his/her own haftarah, he simply requests them in that specific order.

After the tropes have been viewed and played a number of times, the computer will change to a short quiz in which the tropes will be played and then asked to be identified. If the student is correct in his response, the computer will acknowledge with a cheerful "beep" and will keep track of the number right. If the answer is wrong, the student will receive a rather unpleasant "buzz". He will then hear the trope "chanted" again. This time the computer will show the correct response and then move on to the next question.

A game awaits those who have done rather well on this little quiz, complete with color graphics, sounds, and a lot of fun!

How are we doing as far as results? It really is too early to know for sure. I have only been at it for a few months. However, judging from the enthusiasm and local publicity, I have, at the very least, made many people aware of the significance of the Ta'amei

Ha'mikra. It will be some time before I can assess the true educational value of my little "**Hazzan Sheini**".

To the critics of computers and the like being used in Jewish education, I offer but one comment. If I am able to interest only a few of the ever-growing number of youngsters totally "turned-off" by the whole process, then it will be worth the many hours of work.

Because these mini-computers are programmed in the BASIC language, it is possible for someone with absolutely no background (such as myself) to be productive with it.

One more important point is that the computer can be programmed by the older students for the younger ones, thus keeping them involved with Judaica. Of course, the computer has found other uses around the synagogue, from an administrative point of view, but we all expect that from a computer!

I would be most anxious to answer questions and/or correspond with those who are interested in the above.

The beauty of this, I feel, lies in the bringing together of one of the oldest forms of musical notation with one of the newest forms of technology.

A S'lichot Happening

ROBERT STRASSBURG

Dr. Strassburg is a well known American composer and a member of the faculty of the California State University of Los Angeles.

On the evening of September 23, 1978, a singular event took place at the University Synagogue in Los Angeles, California. Under the direction of composer Michael Isaacson his "S'lichot: A High Holy Day Setting" was given an impressive premiere involving Cantor Jay Frailich, a double quartet of voices, seven instrumentalists including flute, viola, cello, bass, harp and two percussionists, with Rabbi Allen Freehling as the reader. The work was handsomely commissioned by the University Synagogue, to its great credit, and performed under the finest circumstances.

In the experience of the writer, rarely have the prayers of penitence recited before the Days of Awe been given such an organic setting. Usually, the S'lichot service, designed to prepare one's thoughts and feelings for the High Holy Days, contains a potpourri of musical styles focusing mainly on cantorial soli with significant support by the choir. Musical idioms vary greatly within the course of the service and, with the exception of the creative efforts of composer-cantors Ephros, Alter, Davidson and a few others, the overall effect is one of fragmentation and disunity.

Isaacson's motivation for writing the new work is traceable to the year 1971 when he was asked to review Cantor Charles Davidson's "Hush of Midnight" S'lichot service for the *Journal of Synagogue Music* (Vol. III, No. 4). As a result he was stimulated to create a S'lichot service that would meet his own idea of what a midnight "hush" should be like. Preparation during the six years that followed included attendance at traditional S'lichot services in Rochester and in Fredonia, New York, as well as in Cleveland and in Los Angeles.

During this period he examined a wide assortment of S'lichot scores and styles. He became convinced that what was needed was a service that would combine new compositional procedures affording him freedom of expression while at the same time creating the appropriate mystical mood.

Isaacson has achieved this throughout his hour-length work by using in part or in whole, *misinai* melodies and traditional S'lichot prayers richly integrated with freshly conceived vocal and instrumental textures. He effectively makes use of such devices as whisperings, controlled ecstasies, sounds and silences in an effective manner.

His compositional vocabulary embraces dodecaphonic tone row and structured aleatoric procedures without distracting the listener with the originality of his approach.

By using the traditional order of the S'lichot prayers interspersed with contemporary religious poetry, and by writing congregational melodies that the worshipper can sing and remember, such as his gentle "*Lishmoa El Harinah*" and his lyrical "*Avinu Malkenu*" with its subtle and numerous transformations, he sustains the listener's attention without the stress that often attends a new and somewhat exotic experience. There is a subtle blending of Western and Eastern musical styles, not unlike that found in Isaacson's earlier Sabbath Eve Service "*Hegyon Libi; The Meditation of My Heart*" written in 1970 for cantor, two-part choir, string quartet and organ.

The composer's imaginative use of motives derived from the *Kol Nidre* melody, and his direct quotation of the high holy day Musaf *Kaddish* further enhances and enriches his service by the familiarity and emotional relevance of these time-honored *nuschaot*. The rabbinical readings, at times, stand alone; but when they are treated to special instrumental settings, are done so without their colorful timbres distracting the listener from the import of the message being delivered.

Most effective, is the manner in which Isaacson brings his S'lichot service to a close. As the lights are dimmed in the sanctuary, the rabbi, cantor, choir, instrumentalists, and finally the conductor make their farewell one by one. A single percussionist remains, playing a subtle postlude very softly and gently on a set of tuned flower pots, as the congregation departs in the silent meditation of the midnight "hush" created by the composer in a most sensitive, sentient and mystical manner.

Dr. Isaacson has produced a challenging worship service rooted in Ashkenazic tradition that invites the test of time through multiple performances by enterprising cantors and rabbis who would like to offer their congregations a new and vital experience. His work fills a void in the modern high holy day literature, renewing the hope that the very promising movement for the advancement of Jewish music that started in the 30's will gain momentum in the years ahead.

THE JEWISH CHORAL TRADITION: ANTIQUITY

LINDA HOROWITZ

Linda Horowitz is the Director of Music at the Westlake School in Los Angeles, She is a graduate of Scripps College in Claremont and holds a Masters Degree in Music from California State University at Fullerton in choral conducting. She wrote her thesis on the history of Yiddish choral music. She is also Director of Special Music Programing at Temple Israel, Hollywood and is a member of two girl chorales in Los Angeles.

During this century, many scientific, historical, and comparative studies have been made concerning different aspects of sacred and secular Jewish music. Yet in the area of Jewish choral music little investigation has taken place. Though the Jewish choral tradition dates back to Biblical times, very few musicologists or conductors are familiar with the extensive Jewish sacred and secular choral literature. This situation is chiefly due to the lack of research in this area and an unfamiliarity with the Jewish languages — Hebrew, Ladino, and Yiddish.

Though, at present, no single text exists on the subject of Jewish choral music, scattered bits of information can be found in the many books offering a general introduction to Jewish music. An excellent guide to materials available on all aspects of Jewish music is Alfred Sendrey's *Bibliography of Jewish Music.* Sendrey, a noted Jewish musicologist, author, and conductor, has also recently written one of the most informative and comprehensive texts on Jewish music during Biblical times. In *Music in Ancient Israel*, Sendrey attempts to present an authentic picture of ancient musical life in Israel by first providing a systematic survey of biblical references to music. The following discussion of choral activity in biblical times is based chiefly on material presented in *Music in Ancient Israel* and in an earlier work by Sendrey, *David's Harp*,³ a popular treatment of the same material for those unfamiliar with Jewish music.

The history of Jewish choral singing was first recorded through oral tradition. Old Testament writings, historical discussions by Greek, Roman, and early rabbinic writers have also provided us with information about early Jewish choral activity. Some of the first Biblical references to choral singing occur in I Samuel 18: 7; **21:11**; and 29:5. From these passages we learn that singing women antiphonally greeted Saul and David after their victory against the Philistines by singing "one to another," using the secular text, "Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands."

When David, King of the tribe of Judah, decided to establish a permanent home for the Ark of the Covenant in Jerusalem, a sacred Jewish musical tradition was begun that has ***continued until*** present times. In I Chronicles 6:1-33, the chronicler has listed the names of those ***Levites*** that David put in charge “of the service of song in the house of the Lord,” and the entry in I Chronicles 15:16-24 provides us with the first description of sacred musical activity in its preTemple stage. The chief Levites, following King David’s instructions, appointed three young singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan to be the principal soloists and leaders at the musical service. Eight additional singers were chosen to sing while accompanying themselves on harps and six Levites also sang while playing lyres. Seven priests were appointed to blow the silver trumpets and Chenaniah, “leader of the Levites in music,” was given the duty of directing the musical forces and instructing all Levitical singers.

The next development in sacred Jewish music occurred when David began plans to build a Temple in which to house the Ark. Knowing that he would probably not live long enough to fulfill his task, David placed his son Solomon in charge of the Temple’s construction and took steps to make certain that the sacred musical service would be continued. First, David took a census of all Levites thirty years of age and older and after finding 4,000 able to meet this qualification, 288 singers were finally chosen to perform in the future house of Jewish worship. The musical body was then divided into twenty-four groups of twelve singers each with the children (sons, though Sendrey believes that the daughters may have participated as well) of the three original soloists (Ethan, Asaph, and Heman) appointed as leaders of each group.

When Solomon completed the First Temple (ca. 980 B.C.E.), a ceremony was planned for the dedication that included the participation of over four hundred singers and musicians. When the one-hundred-and-twenty priests were ready to blow their silver trumpets, the twenty-four choral groups assumed their places and “it came even to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord” (2 Chronicles 5:12-14; 7:6). According to Sendrey, this quotation may represent the first written example of favorable “musical criticism.” The intonation of the combined ensemble must have indeed been praise-worthy if the 120 trumpeters and 288 singers sounded “as one!”.

For the next four hundred years, and until the destruction of Solomon’s First Temple in 586 B.C.E., the Levitical choirs performed

the music which accompanied the daily sacrifices. The sacrifice, presented as a burnt offering or poured libation, was considered the central feature of the sacred service at the First and Second Temples and the Levitical choirs were required to sing at the three daily services which occurred in the morning, at noon, and in the evening. A minimum of twelve singers was required to attend and provide music for each service. The *Mishnah (Tamid 7: 3)* provides us with the information that a different psalm was used for each work day, Sabbath, high holiday, and seasonal festival:

The psalm of the day was intoned as soon as the high priest started to pour out the drink-offering. It was sung traditionally in three sections; between these the singers and instrumentalists made a break, two priests sounded the sacred trumpets and on this signal the people prostrated themselves for adoration.⁵

Sacrifices were not limited to the daily service, however, and private offerings also had to be accompanied by Levitical singing. The performance of the sacrifice and the singing of the Levite choir were so interrelated that with the passage of time the choir providing the musical portion of the sacrifice was called *todah*, the term used for the sacrificial thank-offering itself.

On the Sabbath an additional choir may have doubled the musical forces used in the services; for services performed during the major festival seasons of Passover, Weeks, and Tabernacles, the number of choirs was probably further increased. Though no specific information regarding the rotation of the Levite choirs is to be found in the Bible, Sendrey conjectured that the choir groups probably “rotated on a three-week basis, the three daily services being provided by the same group, with two further groups jointly taking care of Sabbath ceremonies.⁶

From a *Talmudic* description of Temple music at the beginning of the Common Era,⁷ we learn that singers entered the Levite choir at the age of thirty after a five-year apprenticeship, Choristers generally served for twenty years, “retiring” around the age of fifty when the voice began to deteriorate. Sendrey argues, however, that five years of training would have been insufficient for a position that required the memorization of an orally instructed vocal heritage, and in all probability a potential Levitical singer began his or her training for the sacred musical service as a child. Though there is no Biblical mention of children participating in the Levite choral groups, later rabbinical writings support Sendrey’s theory. According to Rabbi Eliezer ben Jacob (1st century C.E.), — the children

did not help to make up the required number, nor did they stand on the Platform; but they used to stand on the ground so that their heads were between the feet of the Levites; and they used to be called the Levites' tormentors.*

From another rabbinical source we learn that the children "did not join the singing with harp and lyre, but with mouth alone to add spice to the music." We do not know what musical form the "spice" took when added to the Levitical song, but Sendrey does theorize as to the nature of choral singing in ancient Israel.

Beginning with the assumption that all music of antiquity, and specifically of the Orient, was monophonic, Sendrey suggests that early Hebraic melodies appeared to have been based largely on a pentatonic scale. Though the Oriental influence was documented by Idelsohn (one of the first musicologists to investigate the Jewish musical heritage) in his historic research on Hebraic melodies. Sendrey notes that qualities associated with the performance of much Oriental music (exaggerated nasal quality and a pronounced vocal tremolo), were not employed by Levitical choir members.

While it is generally accepted that the music of ancient cultures was monophonic, 9 Sendrey suggests that the Hebrew musicians had knowledge of the harmonic intervals of the fifth and possibly the fourth (as shown in stone and wall carvings of neighboring cultures) and very well might have employed them in the accompaniment of traditional melodies. Though Sendrey offers no substantiation for his harmonic idea, this practice may account for the "spice" added by the children's choir.

Attempting to determine the use of dynamics in ancient Hebrew choral singing, Sendrey once again turns to the Bible and rabbinic literature for information. According to Sendrey, an erroneous conception regarding dynamics has prevailed as a result of interpretation based on mistranslated or misrepresented Biblical passages. For centuries scholars have held the opinion that early Jewish music was loud and raucous, based on such passages as 2 Chronicles 15 : 12-14, 20 : 19; Psalm 22: 6; 1 Maccabees 3: 50, 3 : 54, 4 : 24, 4: 39-40; and 9:46, but Sendrey points out that these passages usually refer to calls for help or cried pleas and not actual singing. The fact that the Levite choir was accompanied by soft instruments, lyres and harps, provides additional basis for Sendrey to assert "that the outstanding feature of art-singing in ancient Israel has been euphony and refinement." 10

Saminsky, in *Music in the Ghetto and the Bible* 11 points out that the leader of each of the twenty-four choral groups actually

performed the role of a choral conductor in an ancient and simple form by lowering or raising the hands “in order to remind the choir of the melodic ups and down.” This cheironomic practice of accompanying the performance of the sacred text with hand movements indicating the direction of the melodic line has its origins in both the Egyptian culture, as shown in wall paintings, and in the Greek culture, which developed the name, cheironomy, for the practice. Eventually, the conductors’ gestures to the Levitical choristers were graphically rendered above or near the Biblical text and called ta’amin. These signs or accents were adopted from other Mediterranean cultures and were used to determine the proper intonation and musical rendering of the melodic phrases or tropes. Musicologists argue as to when this practice originated (between 500-800 C.E.?) but all sources agree that ta’amin represent the cheironomic gesture of the Levitical choral conductor. The use of ta’amin did not completely end the practice of directional hand signals and they continued to be used by Palestinian precentors as late as the eleventh century.

Sendrey believes that cheironomic hand gestures were not the only way in which instructions were transmitted from the Biblical conductor to the Levitical choristers or from one generation to the next. The placement of terms and phrases as superscriptions and subscriptions on the psalms may be additional aspects of the Biblical conductor’s “score.” Sendrey suggests that the Levite conductors no doubt developed a musical terminology that could indicate such things as the melody to be chosen for a psalm the use of soloists, and accompanying instruments, and these terms or symbols were placed in the headings or subscriptions to the various psalms. Gradually the meaning of these instructive terms became forgotten or misconstrued and by the 3rd c. B.C.E. “translators of the Septuagint (Greek version of the Old Testament) ... no longer understood these terms, and thus were compelled to take them over phonetically from the original Hebrew.”¹² Sendrey points out that the early church fathers no longer understood the mysterious terms of the tops and bottoms of Psalms and unable to give them a “rational interpretation” they instead provided meanings filled with “all sorts of moral, allegorical, and mystical implications.”¹³

Sendrey, in *Music in Ancient Israel* (p. 138), presents his own list of words referring to musical performance. Terms specifically related to choral participation include: *mizmor*, which “indicates an accompanied psalm to be sung by the precentor, or in which the precentor and chorus sang in a responsorial form; shir, which “is the

specific name for a song of praise most performed by the choir alone;" and *maskil*, which Sendrey believes stands for "a song of praise of a special kind, possibly sung by a soloist with occasional participation of the chorus."

Additional terms connoting choral activity are: *la-menazzeah*, "for the precentor," a phrase indicating that "in such a psalm substantial solo-passages with or without participation of the chorus, have been assigned to the leader in song;" *al'almot*, a specific instruction for the accompaniment of the psalm with high-pitched instruments and perhaps an indication that the "psalm might have conceivably been sung by a women's or boy's choir;" and *al hashe-minit* which probably indicated a male choir accompanied with larger low-pitched instruments."

Sendrey's interpretation of *al'almot* with its suggestion that women may have participated in the Temple choir is a particularly controversial topic among authors on Biblical music. Research done by Idelsohn on the subject led him to believe that female participation in the Temple chorus could not be substantiated. Sendrey, however, believes that the lack of direct references to women as Temple singers is a result of suppression on the part of priestly chroniclers in a purifactory zeal and for him "there is no doubt that women, too, participated in Levitical music or at least in its early period."

The obscuring and eliminating of references to female Temple singers was not totally successful, however, and Sendrey points to several remaining vestiges of biblical passages that hint at the existence of Female singers in Temple services, 2 Samuel 19:36; 2 Chronicles 35:25; Ezra 2:65; Neh 7:67; and Eccles 22:8. The lack of specific references to female choristers in the Levitical choir prevents the quick acceptance of Sendrey's hypothesis; but if female members were allowed, the range of tonal colors available for use in the sacred service would have been increased."

When Solomon's Temple was destroyed in 586 B.C.E., talented Jewish musicians were taken east to Babylon as captives. There they struggled to keep alive their religion and guard their musical liturgy against alien musical practices. In 529 B.C.E., the Persian King, Cyrus, conquered Babylon and out of respect for the ancient religion he allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem. Upon reaching the holy city the Jews quickly set about building a new Temple in which to praise their God. In the Second Temple begun in 638 B.C.E. and completed in 516 B.C.E., the Levitical singers once

again assumed their choral duties and Jewish sacred music continued to flourish for the next four hundred years.

When the Second Temple was destroyed in 70 C.E., the remaining Jewish leaders suppressed all secularism and as a sign of national mourning, all instrumental and vocal music was forbidden (Cit.7a). Most authorities believe that the vocal portion of this rabbinic ban did not apply to synagogal music and during the first centuries of the Common Era all that remained of the once-high are of the Levites was the chanting of the prayers and cantillation according to the ancient melodic modes.

NOTES

1. Sendrey, Alfred. ***Bibliography of Jewish Music***. New York: Columbia University Press, 1959.
2. ———. ***Music in Ancient Israel***. New York: Philosophical Library, 1969.
3. Sendrey, Alfred, and Mildred Norton. ***David's Harp: The Story of Music in Biblical Times***. New York: The New American Library, 1969.
4. B.C.E. or Before the Common Era is the Jewish term for what is commonly referred to as B.C.
5. Sendrey, Alfred. ***Music in Ancient Israel***. p. 175-6.
6. Sendrey, Alfred and Mildred Norton. ***David's Harp***. p. 49.
7. The term Common Era refers to the period generally known as A.D.
8. Sendrey, Alfred. ***Music in Ancient Israel***, p. 171.
9. It is believed that ancient musical cultures also practiced ***heterophony*** (two musicians play or sing a melody and one of them elaborates upon it) and magadizing (a melody performed in octaves).
10. Sendrey, Alfred. ***Music in Ancient Israel***. p. 255.
11. Saminsky, Lazar. ***Music of the Ghetto*** and ***the Bible***. New York: Bloch Publishers, 1934.
12. Sendrey, Alfred. Music in ***Ancient Israel***, p. 112.
13. ***Ibid.***
14. Sendrey, Alfred. ***Music in Ancient Israel***. p. 490.
15. Female participation in the Levitical choir would also provide an historical precedent for the present proliferation of female cantors and choral directors in Southern Californian synagogues.

THE INFLUENCE OF SALOMONE ROSSI'S MUSIC:
PART TWO

DANIEL CHAZANOFF

*(A continuation of an article on the subject published in
Vol. VIZ, No. 4, October 1977.)*

*The first products of this new, more intimate music that
we call chamber music are to be found in the works of
Salomone Rossi . . .*

Paul Henry Lang
Music in Western Civilization, p. 367

This is the eighth in a series of articles on the music of Salomone Rossi by Daniel Chazanoff. Dr. Chazanoff's studies on Rossi were made possible by a research grant from the National Foundation for Jewish Culture.

The author has had twenty-five years of experience as a teacher, performer, conductor and administrator. His accomplishments are currently listed in three international and two national biographical.

FATHER OF THE TRIO SONATA

To fully comprehend Rossi's contribution in the realm of instrumental music, one needs to be aware of the many musical trends which existed simultaneously at the beginning of the 17th century — and their fusion in his works. In the words of Ulrich, "The first half of the seventeenth century is perhaps, the most confused and complicated of all periods in music history."¹ The reasons given are:^{*}

1. the continued presence of the old polyphonic (meaning contrapuntal or many-voiced writing) style. Measure number five of Rossi's first trio sonata entitled "Sinfonia Prima," illustrates this; note the independence of the three string parts.⁸

EX. 1



2. the emergence of the new monodic (homophonic) style (this is also referred to as the basso continuo or figured bass which formed the beginning of chords to accompany a single melodic line). In measure number nine of the same work by Rossi we encounter an example of block-like vertical chords in the three string parts.*

Ex. 2

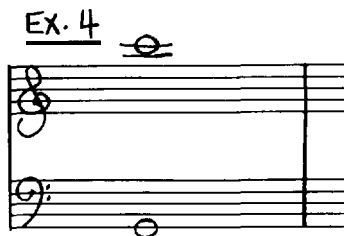


3. the appearance of instrumental music with a vocal style in some cases (vocal compositions were also freely transcribed to be played on instruments). In the opening two measures of Rossi's "Sinfonia Prima" all three string parts are scale-like in character and narrow in range, indicating a vocal orientation.⁵

Ex. 3



4. the appearance of instrumental music with a well-developed instrumental style (this meant a widening range of sound as the virtuosity of players and instrument quality improved). "Sinfonia 27" (originally published in Rossi's "Rook II, 1608," is number 12 in that collection) has a range of three octaves plus a perfect fourth.⁶



C above the treble staff would be played in the third position on the violin. Corelli, at the end of the 17th century, believed that the violin should not be played above the third position because it did not sound well there. Considering that this sinfonia was written about 75 years before Corelli's statement, it is ahead of its time.

5. instrumental music which combined instrumental and vocal styles. The combination of skips (instrumental style) and steps (vocal style) is found in measure number 9 of "Sinfonia 3" of 1607 in all three string parts.'



6. the lack of uniformity in labelling the forms or different names given to the same kind of form: sinfonia, concerto, canzona, and sonata. The reader should be aware that any work sounded on instruments at the beginning of the 17th century was a sonata. Therefore the term sonata was a generic term interchangeable with any form written for instruments. During Rossi's time, sonatas were written for small groups of instruments. The solo sonata did not come into being until the latter half of the 17th century.
7. stylistic differences in the same form when written for a larger or smaller group of instruments. For example Rossi's

five part string works sometimes contain sustained bass line parts compared with greater interplay between the bass and the upper two string parts in his three part string works.

8. the presence of two diverse formal styles, the sonata and the canzona. According to Ulrich, the canzona and sonata styles were most clearly differentiated around 1610 as seen in the chart which follows: 8

CANZONE STYLE	SONATA STYLE
1. Derived from contrapuntal and imitative texture.	1. Largely of homophonic texture.
2. Rhythmic diversity was not great.	2. Greater rhythmic diversity – note values range from a half note to a sixteenth.
3. Melodies contained short, motive-like phrases with repeated notes in evidence.	3. Lengthened melodic phrases, four or eight measures to achieve melodic expression.
4. Narrow melodic range.	4. Greater melodic range.
5. Definite rhythmic beat was typical and duple meter usual.	5. Primarily expressive – lacked the regular pulse of the canzona.
6. Not greatly concerned with instrumental medium, i.e., music for music's sake whether vocal or instrumental.	6. Nature of instruments taken into account, i.e., phrasing marks and writing.
7. Equality of voices typical of counterpoint.	7. Inner voices less important.

We can see from the chart, that the canzona derived its characteristics from the 16th century Renaissance while the sonata became a 17th century Baroque phenomenon. Rowen articulates the difference in saying that the canzona fused fugal methods with dance techniques while the trio sonata was not steeped in counterpoint. The rivaling alternation or dialogue between two melodic instruments in a simple setting of thirds and sixths prepared dissonances interspersed with imitative figures was the stylistic principle of the trio sonata.⁹ If any similarity between the canzona and the trio sonata can be found, it is in the contrast between imitative and chordal sections.¹⁰ For example Rossi's "Sinfonia Prima" (1607) opens with an imitative section in duple meter followed by a dance-like chordal section, in triple meter, resembling a galliard.

9. the corresponding musical forms partake of one style sometimes and of others at other times; these were interchangeable.

A word of clarification becomes necessary here. The trio sonata was born in Rossi's "First Book of Sinfonias and Galliards," dated 1607. While the collection was written for stringed instruments, it was for viols rather than violins. This writer has established June 2, 1608 as the first time that Rossi used violins rather than viols, when his first composition for the stage was performed. It was not until 1613 that he specified violins rather than viols in the writing of chamber music. This was the final step in establishing the violin as the performing medium of baroque string music in Italy.

Finally, acoustics were important in determining the size of ensemble and its timbre during the early baroque. At that time, the term 'da camera' "... meant any kind of music not destined for a church or opera use, and thus stood neither for a form nor a style."¹¹ In earlier articles, this writer pointed out that Rossi's religious music was confined to the 33 psalms entitled, *The Songs of Solomon* for 3 to 8 voices. Hence, he used no instruments, following tradition, in writing music for the synagogue. During the same period, however, Giovanni Gabrielli wrote sonatas and canzonas for single and double brass choirs (used antiphonally) as choirmaster of St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice. Rossi's involvement with opera came about as a result of his close relationship with Claudio Monteverdi; who was the first great composer of opera; he wrote a prelude for one of Monteverdi's early music dramas. At the same time, Rossi organized the large body of instruments, using violins rather than viols, which Monteverdi conducted from the keyboard in the performance of his early operas at the Mantuan Court. The trio sonata, then, evolved from Rossi's ability as both a string player and composer. In a functional sense, the trio sonata came about as the result of a need for a more intimate kind of music at court using fewer players to entertain royalty in a 'da camera' (chamber) setting.

The emancipation of instrumental from vocal music was, therefore, a gradual process which saw a great deal of experimentation in wavering between old and new concepts. In moving from the late Renaissance to the early Baroque, composers of the period made use of a variety of techniques involving texture, timbre, structure and style; Rossi's trio sonatas were innovative in the case of all four musical components.

Bukofzer, a leading authority on the musical baroque, credits Rossi with the establishment of the trio sonata, the classic medium of baroque chamber music.¹² It appeared in the "First Book of Sinfonie et Gagliarda" for 3 to 5 voices, dated 1607.¹³ While the texture was homophonic, the works in this book used viols accom-

panied by a chittarone (bass lute). It was in his "Third Book of Variation Sonatas," dated 1613, that Rossi specified two violins and basso continuo (a keyboard) as his instrumentation.¹⁴ Rossi's influence is seen in the cultivation of the trio sonata by the composer, Marini in his publication entitled *Affeti Musicali*, dated 1617.¹⁵ Other composers of the period who followed the trend in Italy included Belli, Riccio, Turini, Merula, Bernardi, Grandi and Frescobaldi.¹⁶ By the middle of the 17th century, English composers were also writing trio sonatas. One notable example is a collection entitled *Twelve Sonatas for Two Violins and a Base, with a Thorough Bass for the Organ or Theorbo* by John Jenkins. It was published around 1653.¹⁷

The term trio sonata may cause some confusion. Traditionally, it consists of four elements, i.e., two upper voices to be played by violins, a bass line for a melodic instrument (usually a cello) and a chordal instrument to fill in the harmonies (generally a keyboard).¹⁸

Rossi's influence continued during the second half of the 17th century in the works of the great Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713), who wrote both the sonata da camera (chamber sonata) and da chiesa (church sonata) among his trio sonatas.¹⁹ They were written for two violins, violone (between a cello and double bass) or theorbo (a kind of archlute) and organ.²⁰ It is interesting to note that the slow-fast-slow-fast pattern found in the sonata da chiesa first appeared in Rossi's "Sonata detta La Moderna" of 1613. This writer also suspects that Corelli used both the style and instrumentation of the trio sonata in still another way. It was in the "Concerto Grosso" that Corelli contrasted the tutti (all) and the concertino (the small chamber grouping within the large orchestral group). If any place of origin can be found for the concertino, it is in the trio sonata. Ulrich corroborates this in saying "... although violin style was not perfected until the end of the century in the sonatas and concertos of Corelli, its evolution began in the variation sonatas of Salomon Rossi as early as 1613."²¹

But even later than Corelli came Antonio Vivaldi (c.1669-1741), whose opus 3 contained 12 concerti *grossi*. Two of these, opus 3, number 2 in G and number 11 in D, contain the instrumentation of the trio sonata in the solo parts while two others, number 5 in A and number 8 in A, retain two violins in dialogue all characteristic of Rossi's trio sonatas.

With the growth of concert halls during the latter part of the 17th century, concert music was no longer confined to court circles. Yet, while the concerto grosso made use of a relatively large orches-

tra, it retained an early baroque tendency in the use of the concertino for acoustical contrast. This had its origins in Rossi's first instrumental experiments of 1607.

FOOTNOTES

1. Homer Ulrich, *Chamber Music*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943). p. 55.
2. Ibid.
3. Fritz Rikka and Joel Newman, Editors. *Sinfonie, 1607-1608*, (Bryn Mawr. Pennsylvania. Mercury Music Corp., 1971). Volume III.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ulrich. op. cit., p. 59.60.
9. Ruth Halle Rowen, *The Emergence of the String Quartet*, (New York: Unpublished Master's Thesis. Columbia University). p. 49-50.
10. Alex Harman and Milner Man *and His Music*, (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1959). p. 294.
11. Paul Henry Lang, *Music in Western Civilization* (New York W. W. Norton and Co., 1941), p. 366.
12. Manfred T. Bukofzer. *Music in the Baroque Era*, (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1947). p. 53.
13. Ulrich. op. cit., p. 62.
14. Ibid.
15. Bukofzer. loc. cit.
16. Ibid.
17. A. Hyatt King. *Chamber Music*, (New York: chanticleer Press, 1946). p. 24-25.
16. Nicholas Slanimaky, Editor. *The International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1956, Revised Eighth Edition), p. 1162.
19. Rowen, op. cit., p. 56.
20. Ibid.
21. Homer Ulrich, *Symphonic Music* (New York: Columbia University Press, Second Printing, 1955), p. 10.

TO GERSHON EPHROS:

In Lieu Of A Kaddish

MAX WOHLBERG

It is difficult to reconcile oneself to the thought that never again will I hear his soft, mellow voice on the telephone. Life has become impoverished by his departure.

While he was the gentlest of men he was also the most militant in behalf of the pure and the more beautiful in Jewish Music. Recalling the numberless conversations we have had, two revealing facts seem to emerge:

1. The preponderant number of them concerned the music of the Synagogue and the Cantorate.

2. Since not a scintilla of malice found shelter in his saintly character, he never spoke ill of anyone. While an occasional disagreement on some minor matter was unavoidable, one instinctively knew that his reasons were on the side of the artistic, the esthetic and the truth. Similarly, in his music, it was evident that he ceaselessly plodded for perfection, eschewing the vulgar and the commonplace.

Oddly enough, he was both an idealist and a realist. Fully aware that comparatively few would accept and perform some of his more recent compositions, he, as an honest man, would not compromise his sacred art for he believed with a perfect heart that in time the rightness of his efforts would be recognized and his work would meet with approval.

It is no exaggeration to declare that Synagogue Music is finer because there lived in our midst a humble and blessed man whose name was Gershon Ephros. He was industrious to the end. New ideas, untried ventures, novel possibilities crowded his ever-youthful, fertile mind. His multi-faceted works deserve serious consideration, study and analysis.

Dr. Max Wohlberg is Professor of Nusah at the Cantors Institute of The Jewish Theological Seminary.

A friendship of half a century has come to an end and it is painful to admit that Gershon Ephros is with us no more. In truth, the dearly beloved, gentle soul is forever with us. I feel his warm handshake, his fond embrace. I see his understanding, delicate smile. I sense his closeness and I hear his cautious comments.

We thank the Lord for the privilege of having been in his presence, for having been exposed to the nobility of his personality and for having shared his dreams for our sacred profession. The loved and the pleasant are not parted by death.

Dear Gershon, we loved you in life and your blessed memory is a most precious heritage. As you leave us, a part of us goes with you.

AN OPEN LETTER TO OUR READERS

Dear Reader:

I am pleased to announce the first publication of a new series entitled ISRAEL STUDIES IN MUSICOLOGY. It will serve as the official organ of the Israel Musicological Society. The intention is to print the best in recent Israeli and European-American musical scholarship and to work, as far as possible, for an increased understanding of intercultural relationships. ISRAEL STUDIES will be issued as an annual. The job of its editing will be shared in rotation by the various academic institutions its represents. The first volume was prepared by the Jewish Music Research Center at Hebrew University as a birthday offering to Edith Gerson-Kiwi and Hanoch Avenary, two of the pillars of Israeli musicology. Volume II, scheduled for publication in the fall of 1979, is currently being prepared by Bar-Ilan University, Ramat-Gan (Editor: Bathia Churgin).

The Israel Musicological Society was founded in 1956 and re-organized in 1968. Since the inauguration of musicology as an academic discipline in the universities of Israel — starting from the mid-'sixties Departments of Musicology were opened successively at Hebrew University, Tel-Aviv University and Bar-Ilan University — musical scholarship in the country has taken vast strides forward. Research is pursued intensively today by a large number of scholars — musicologists, ethnomusicologists — of the older and younger generations; they work in areas that cover a wide span of the subject matter of present-day Eastern and Western musical inquiry. The launching of a journal of the Society comes as the fulfillment at long last of the hopes of our scholars to have a vehicle of communication of their research to the outside world. At the same time it was made possible by the achievements of these same scholars in the academic and scientific domains. It marks a milestone in the short, but eventful history of musicology in Israel. More than ever it commits us to the pursuit of the high aims for which our Society was founded.

As a new periodical however ISRAEL STUDIES IN MUSICOLOGY has all the problems of a newly born child. It must be carefully nurtured and assisted in its development. The first volume was put out against great financial odds and almost in defiance of those who said that we would never be able to do it. But now that it is out, our immediate concern is to guarantee its survival. And survival means financial support. Only through such support will the continued publication of ISRAEL STUDIES be assured.

I am turning to you, dear Reader, to assist us in our venture. Yearly dues for members of the Society, entitling them to their copy of ISRAEL STUDIES, have been set at \$10. But I hope you will find it possible to assure us of an even stronger measure of your support by pledging a larger sum as a patron or sustaining member. Checks may be made payable to the Israel Musicological Society, according to the address P.O.B. 503, Jerusalem, Israel. The Society looks to all friends of Israel and of musical scholarship for your help at this crucial moment in its development.

Yours sincerely,

Don Harran
Chairman,
Israel Musicological Society

REVIEW OF NEW MUSIC

"Twelve Songs" for Solo voice *with piano accompaniment*, by *Lazar Weiner; Translations by Samuel Rosenbaum, Transcontinental Music Publications, New York.*

Lazar Weiner is a composer of musical distinction who has made enormous contributions to the field of Jewish music. His latest collection of art songs, entitled "TWELVE SONGS," was recently published by Transcontinental Music. These are art songs, set to selected Yiddish poems by some of our finest poets, and freely translated into English by the gifted Samuel Rosenbaum. The book is a compilation of songs dating from 1936 to 1977.

Between language and music there exists a very close, if not inseparable, relationship. This relationship is always evident in the chordal harmonies, the rhythmic patterns and melodic motifs of each era in which the composer is creating. In this collection, Weiner reveals a modern harmonic approach. He has embellished the vocal lines of his songs with a rich garland of improvisations, individual in character.

These are not the simple and straightforward songs of the conventional type. Rather, Weiner has chosen to employ atonal skips, diatonic motifs and arbitrary rhythmic patterns. His chordal sequences are often dissonant and lean heavily on chromatic sequences, parallel 4ths and 5ths, and pentatonic patterns. Throughout, his songs reveal a sensitive feeling for color. There are passages of poetic beauty, meditative calm, as well as harsh and fiercely turbulent sections. Whether haunting, or powerful, or built on liturgical melodic patterns, one feels Weiner is always searching for an expression of the soul of his people.

Perhaps the best analysis of Weiner's music can be summed up by his own remarks: "Vocal music was the primary love in my life, which is the reason why I dedicated most of my life to this genre. Poetry, particularly Yiddish poetry, took second place in my life. I chose poetry written by the finest contemporary poets, and my aim was to recreate word and mood into sound. The subject matters that intrigued me were: life, justice, and problems of people seeking justice and righteousness. I am not interested in sentimentality per se, even though I have written some love songs. My aim was to recreate words and mood into sound. My tools are form, rhythm, harmony, melodic lines, and the marriage of text and sound. I never aimed to write melody for the sake of melody."

The pieces in "Twelve Songs" cannot be termed *Zieder* because the *Lied* was the flower of romantic music, and Weiner spurns sentimentality. Rather, they are "art songs," in the style, perhaps, of a Lukas Foss, and will require the talents of a highly trained singer and an equally virtuoso pianist. They are finely structured and impressive in their well-developed sense of sound and melodic treatment of the voice, in which the folklore element often plays an important part. However, it is in his accompaniments to the songs that Weiner clearly demonstrates his disdain for conventional harmony, and one sometimes wonders if the contemporary clashing chords are not an intellectual excursion rather than an emotional experience.

How should an accompaniment be written? Should it be indissolubly linked with the epoch of its birth, and subordinated to the vocal line, or should it remain an unfettered expression of the times, looking for new sensations and stimulations? Here Weiner has obviously developed his own style — austere, stark, polytonal and polychordal. Like Charles Ives, he apparently feels that dissonance best portrays the modern pulsating American life. And like Ives, Weiner too, excels in impressionism. Like Aaron Copland, his musical style seems to have been molded by his Russian heritage, his contact with French music of the twenties, and the American folksong. And like Lukas Foss, who also seeks to adopt the American idiom into his works, Weiner shows the influence of Hindemith at many points in his compositions.

The twelve songs are finely etched cameos, many of short duration, and might best be performed in their entirety as a song-cycle.

The first one, "*Mayn Shprakh*," is a rhapsodic paean of praise. Set to the stirring words of J. Papernikov, it reaffirms his strong identification with the Yiddish language. "I will continue to sing my song in Yiddish for so long as I know that somewhere someone longs to hear it," says he. Above the steady reiteration of a triplet motif in the accompaniment, the song rises in intensity to an impassioned espousal of the Yiddish word. Constantly the triplets continue, emphasized by a sequence of dissonant chordal progressions of 7ths, adding heightened excitement, until one can almost sense the beating of the human heart, or perhaps the pulse, even, of our Yiddish language.

"*Baym Bentshn Licht*," which Weiner dedicated to his two mothers, is a serene tone poem, subdued and mystic. Samuel Rosenbaum's translation of Joseph Rubinstein's words says:

“My mother cries as she blesses the Sabbath lights.

I **cannot make out** the words.

I see only the tears as they roll gently down her cheek.

As I watch, a candle is showered in tears.

A candlestick sobs as she, the flame shedding burning team.”

A radiant glow rests over this song, which is laced with Weiner’s penchant for diatonic progressions. This is not a melody that persists in your mind’s ear. Rather, its sparsely etched lines remind one of the school of “minimal painting” used by some of the artists of today.

The melody line of “Mit Mayn **Zeydn**,” (Yiddish by M. Yungman), is reminiscent of prayer chant. It conveys an aura of the old synagogue and conjures up visions of talmudic scholars deep in study. The melody is liturgical in flavor and in feeling. The accompaniment, with its descending arpeggios, creates a Debussy-like impression of tonal mysticism, and is truly a palette of lovely sound.

To Yehudi and David
3. Mit Mayn Zeydn

Zelde
Yiddish translation by M. Yungman

Molto *aspressivo* (like chanting) (♩=50) *pr*—3

VI Av.

ro-hom o - vi - nu Vos hot ge - tzeylt di shte - rn bai nacht, Vos hot fun kalch -

oy - vn a - roys Ge - ru - fn tzum ba - she - fer, Ge - firt zaynzun tzu der a -

key - de - Iz mayn zey - de ge - ven. Di ey - ge - ne e - mu - no shlo - mo -
melody marcato

“*Der Held*,” is the story of a war hero who served in the army, only to lose his hand and his home, for the dubious reward of three medals. Written in 1936, during the upheavals in Europe, Weiner uses 7th chords to point up the bitterness expressed in Roisenblatt’s words. Always one hears the same query: “*Iz dos dir noch veinik?*” “*Is that not enough?*” One can feel Weiner’s indignation at the injustice of war as the song gathers momentum through the use of harsh chordal patterns.

“*Farbaygeyer*,” “*Passerby*,” is set to a poem by Rajzel Zychlinska. It is enigmatic and contemplative, an abstract tonal picture. One could almost call this song “*images in sound*.” Its gentle quality

reminds one of the abstract colorations in a Frankenthaler painting. The meditative calm is enhanced by a series of atmospheric arpeggios, this time ascending, and generously besprinkled with soft chromatic tonal intervals.

kol. Vos geyt m i r noch fun vi - gl. Ich kuk zich

um, Fat-shlo-sn hot der zun far-gang, Dem t o y er, Ich ze noch bloyz a

let - zte pley-tze Fun a far - shpe - tik-tn fus gey-er.

The sixth song, “*Din Zaynen Di Vent*,” by the same poet, is slow, somber and hauntingly beautiful, with a supportive accompaniment which sympathetically embellishes the quiet brooding of the vocal line.

“Thin are the walls
 In the house where I live ...
 Often I hear my neighbor talk in his sleep —
 Deaf sounds, incomprehensible,
 As if from a grave ...
 I, alone, lie awake and wait ...”

Zychlinska’s next poem, “*Ich Hob Dich Shoyrn Lang*,” is another sensitive and impressionistic tone poem from Weiner’s gifted pen.

“Long since last I held you, my child,
 So, empty are my hands ...
 Long **since** last I heard your laughter,
 So, silent is my life ...”

Gently intertwined with the melody are parallel patterns of chromatic notes.

To Sarah-Naomi

7. Ich Hob Dich Shoyrn Lang

Rajzel Zychlinska

Slow and Gentle

pp *3*

Ich h o b dich shoyrn lang nit a - rum ge -

pp

nu men: Mayn kind. ————— Zay-nen ley dik may ne hent

3

"*Arop Un Aroyf*," set to the words of H. Leivick, ("Up and Down"), is a fine, well-structured song, easily "singable," with an accompaniment quite supportive of the melody. Slow and sustained, it expresses in eloquent fashion the stirrings of the soul and the hopelessness of life.

'*A Nign*' might just as easily have been called "A Tale." Jacob Glatstein relates the story of a Jew sitting lonely and forlorn. As he thinks upon the approaching Sabbath, he philosophizes in song, and gains strength and hope for a brighter life ahead. He becomes rhapsodic as Queen Sabbath approaches, and the song grows with excitement until it reaches a dance-like section of rhythmic agitation, climaxing finally on a high A flat. It is of greater length than many of the other songs, and includes recitativo and cantillation motifs that give it color, variety and pace. The accompaniment captures and enhances the spirit and character of the words. The song is a little jewel.

The image displays two systems of musical notation. The first system is for the song "Arop Un Aroyf" and the second is for "A Nign". Each system consists of a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

System 1: "Arop Un Aroyf"

Vocal line: shvel a bi - sl, Zi beygt zich on un

Piano accompaniment: The piano part features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the bass and a more active melody in the treble, often using arpeggiated chords. The first two measures of the piano part are marked with a '7', indicating a seventh chord.

System 2: "A Nign"

Vocal line: git im a kush oy - fn shte - rn,

Piano accompaniment: Similar to the first system, the piano part provides harmonic support with eighth-note patterns in the bass and melodic lines in the treble. The first two measures of the piano part are marked with a '7'.

“*Vu Zennen Di Yidn*,” text by Itzik Manger, is an interesting composition. “Where are they, those Jews who once believed in God? — the mothers who faithfully kindled Sabbath lamps, and wept over prayer books and at graves?” Expressive and poignant, the song captures the anguished feeling of the text. Weiner utilizes the additional ploy of “*sprechstimme*” interspersed within the melody, to develop the gripping tension expressed by the poem. The juxtaposition of melody line and spoken word makes for a novel musical fresco which is both exciting and austere.

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4.

System 1: The vocal line begins with a triplet of eighth notes. The lyrics are: "Tzu ba - fray - en di mentsh - hayt, Alemal vu iz Der zilberner schnei fun farayorn!" The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and chords in the right hand.

System 2: The tempo is marked "Tempo I". The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "Freg haynt, freg mor-gn un freg toy - znt mol, Chotsh". The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings like *f* and *ff*.

System 3: The tempo is marked "Adagio marcato". The vocal line includes the lyrics: "s'hartz vert tze-zetzt lar vey - tik un far tzo - rn, der ent - fer iz Alemal vu iz Der zilberner schnei fun farayorn!". The piano accompaniment features a *molto cresc.* marking and a triplet of eighth notes.

"*El Khanun*," song #11, text by Kadya Molodowsky, is strongly influenced by prayer modes. The use of chant in the beginning transports the listener into a religious mood. The accompaniment highlights the feeling of bitterness and reproach against God for His lack of solicitude for the Jewish people. "Merciful God, pick yourself another people for a while — we are sick of death and dying ..." The song is a powerful indictment of God's harsh treatment of the Jewish people. The dramatic quality of the song is increased by a high tessitura, and at the climax the artist is singing a high B flat against a chord containing a B natural and an A flat! One almost wants to wince at this uncompromising approach.

The last song, "Di Dame Mitn Hintl," "The Lady with the Little Dog," poem by Molodowsky, is quite a departure from Weiner's other songs. Here we have a charming story, all sunshine and light; piquant, imaginative and humorous. Weiner employs his many techniques to good avail, and they highlight the words with their descriptive sounds. His bold harmonies and his piano chord clusters, sometimes achieved through elbows and forearms striking the keyboard, his use of glissandi, and his clumped clusters of white or black keys, become as much theatrical as they are musical. One often feels percussion instruments at work.

The image shows a musical score for the song "El Khanun." It consists of three staves: a vocal line in treble clef, a piano accompaniment in treble clef, and a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo and dynamics markings are "Pesante ed molto cresc." and "ff". The vocal line begins with a rest, followed by the lyrics "Far - hakt Un far - pakt Un men fort. Draï". There are two triplet markings (3) over the notes "pakt" and "fort.". The piano accompaniment features a series of chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand with a "sempre" marking. The word "simile" is written above the piano accompaniment.

Deciso

Pesante

Un a kleyn hin - ti! Git a shprunga - fn kop ir a hunt, A groy-ser, A

bey - zer, A pud mit a funt. Git di da-me a kvitch!

f *sfz* *ff* *colla voce* *ff* *sf* *ff* *fast*

gliss

forearm

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts with a triplet of eighth notes marked 'Deciso' and 'f'. The piano accompaniment has a bass line with a 'gliss' marking and a 'forearm' instruction. The second system continues the vocal line with another triplet marked 'Pesante' and 'ff', and the piano accompaniment with a 'fast' marking. The lyrics are in Yiddish and describe a hunt scene.

Weiner's songs are art songs, put together with considerable skill and imagination. They have form. They have craftsmanship. They have beauty. They have color. But are they sophisticated expressions destined to remain reserved for the elite few? Who is there to sing them? And who is there to hear them? Alas, the murmuring of Yiddish voices grows fainter day by day, despite Weiner's protestations of faith. The average concert-goer, with few exceptions, is more interested, unfortunately, in music that titillates and entertains.

The problem, then, is to find an audience that can understand and appreciate Weiner's "unorthodox" method of composition. But this requires education. How does one get it? An audience uninterested in the creative activity of its own time is an audience of museum-goers, not an audience of live ears. Music must be a living, continuing art. It is a culture that must be nurtured.

There is a lot of old-fashioned bull-headed prejudice against contemporary music. Many people condemn it without listening to it. Listening is indeed the key. Not every song has to be a masterpiece, just as we don't demand that every book be a masterpiece. The important thing is that the music have audience exposure. Of one thing we can be sure — if new music does not get that exposure, then the wellspring of creativity will dry up due to a lack of performance outlets, and then there never will be any new "masterpiece."

I should respectfully like to recommend such a project to the Cantors Assembly. I think the Assembly should sponsor a number of chamber recitals of Yiddish folk and art songs in two or three of the major cities throughout the year, and invite Jewish singers who are willing to coach, to learn and prepare for these concerts the Jewish masterpieces that are lying fallow and unheard all about us. Perhaps these concerts could be preceded by an informative talk a half hour before the program begins, such as is sponsored by the Cleveland Orchestra, where illuminating remarks on some phase of Jewish music could be presented. I feel very strongly that if this is not done, the Jewish song will surely die, or descend to the level of "Oif'n Pripetchik," rather than taking wing and growing.

No People can live in the present without looking ahead to the future. Thomas Mann once said, "Just as little as one can under-

stand the New and the Young without being at home in tradition, just as sterile must the love of the Old remain if one closes one's mind to the New which came forth from it with historical necessity."

I do not say that Lazar Weiner's music is the culmination of our creativity, but I do say that we must hear what is going on in the musical world, even if it may sound noisy or strange to some ears. Let us beware of cocksure opinions; they are valuable only to the one who expresses them. Music is not necessarily bad because it is of a different and irregular nature. For audiences to have no curiosity about new works, no spur to hot discussion concerning them, is to encourage stagnation in art. Our present-day audiences must approach a new work not with the expectation that it will reaffirm previous impressions, but with the thrill of curiosity for what a composer has to say that is new which they did not hear before. Then they will find themselves enriched by a great artistic experience.

Viewing this musical offering of "TWELVE SONGS" by Lazar Weiner, one cannot help but be impressed by his creative urge. Nor can anyone deny that the whole stream of Jewish music is enriched by his genius. Lazar Weiner is the pre-eminent composer of Jewish art songs today.

IDA MEISELS

Ida Meisels is a talented pianist, arranger, pedagogue and composer working almost exclusively in the field of Jewish music, both secular and liturgical. She has published almost three score felicitous arrangements for chorus, solo with piano accompaniment. She is the wife of Hazzan Saul Meisels of Temple on the Heights in Cleveland. Together, they have given hundreds of concerts and recitals of Jewish music for the last three decades to great critical and popular acclaim

“Ladino Songs: Montanas Atlas” (High Mountains) voice, *flute and piano* and “Ah, El Novio No Quere Dinero!” (Ah, The Groom Wants No Money!) *voice and piano or guitar*. **By Richard Neumann, Transcontinental Publications, New York.**

We are grateful to Richard Neumann for his continued interest in the rich treasure of Ladino folksong literature. With the publication of two new settings he once again demonstrates his talent for creating arrangements which retain the original Spanish character of the melodies at the same time enhancing the overall effect of the song. His accompaniments never get in the way of the singer. “Montanas Altas” is a hauntingly beautiful song of unrequited love with a distinctive Spanish flavor. The melismatic style is very much suited to the Hazzan. However, the Hazzan should be careful not to impose the liturgical style of the synagogue on this unique art form. The flute obligato drawn from the melodic material adds another dimension to the overall effect.

The eight (8) measure section in 6/8 time consisting of a series of parallel fifths in the bass is very effective writing which helps to create an atmosphere of an earlier age. Mr. Neumann has wisely arranged the piano accompaniment so that the song is still very effective if a flute is not available.

Oh, “El Novio No Qere Dinero!” is a lively wedding song with humorous overtones. It is a wonderful contrast to Montanas Altas. The groom’s lack of interest in a dowry and his desire to marry for love must have been an unusual event in the Spanish Jewish community of yesteryear in order for this idea to be enshrined in a song. The spirited Spanish rhythm in the accompaniment lends vitality and thrust to the song making it a delight to perform. It is regrettable that we are not provided with an English translation of either of these songs, particularly when they contain old Spanish words which are no longer used in the modern language. Nevertheless, these songs are a welcome addition to the growing repertoire of Ladino Songs thanks to Mr. Neumann’s persistence and interest.

David Schiff — “Wedding Verses” for *tenor (Cantor), soprano and alto*, by David Schiff, *Transcontinental Publications, New York*.

A young talented composer emerging on the Jewish musical scene, David Schiff has written a charming wedding song utilizing several short verses from Shir Hashirim, “*Dodi Li Vaani Lo*” and “*Hareini Et Mareaich, Hashmiini Et Kolech*”, and from Hosea, “*Veratstich Li L’olam*”. It begins with a lovely refrain, “*Dodi Li*” written for three voices soprano, alto and tenor (Cantor). The refrain is of rhythmic interest with a recurring three measure pattern in 3/4, 6/8 and 5/8 time. The solo portions are written in a free unmeasured style with the slightest suggestion of the Shir Hashirim mode.

While the publication suggests that the tenor part may be sung by the cantor, it would appear to me impractical at an actual wedding where the cantor is under the Hupa, particularly since he does not sing the melody in the refrain. However, the solo parts can be sung by the cantor.

It is regrettable that the selection is so short in duration. This writer would have liked to see the solo parts developed further. They rather end abruptly. A careful study of this composition reveals a thoroughly schooled musician who has the tools to contribute much to the Jewish musical scene.

BEN BELFER

Ben W. Belfer is the hazzan of Temple B'nai Sholom, Rockville Centre, New York. He is also a member of the faculty of the Cantors Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary.

MA'ARIV: Evening Devotion, *for Baritone, Reader, Chorus and Orchestra*, by **Herbert Fromm**, *Transcontinental Music Publications, New York*.

“Ma’ariv” by Herbert Fromm is not the traditional *tefillat Arvit* or evening service as found in the siddur, but a setting of three prayers and a hymn (**Adon Olam**) for baritone, reader, mixed choir, and orchestra. The orchestral part is also available in a keyboard reduction by the composer in a vocal score.

The three prayers are taken from different services connected with “evening”, but do not have any traditional *matbeah shel tefilla*. These are personal choices of Fromm, set to music in a kind of cantata form. The first prayer used is the **Ma-ariv aravim** – the first paragraph before the **Sh'ma**; the next one is **Elohai N'tzor** (keep my tongue from evil); the third is the opening prayer of **Sh'ma Al Hamita** (the prayer recited on retiring for the night). As mentioned before, the hymn is a setting of **Adon Olam**.

The music is atonal, perhaps almost serial in style. All the pieces convey a kind of serenity associated with night, rest, and sleep. Perhaps that is the reason that these settings are wanting in bringing forth climaxes. In its specific style and musical language they are held together by a rhythmic pattern that is found in each piece. The first 2-4 measures give that rhythmic motive that carries the composition to its end. The settings are predominantly for soloist, the choir being almost an echo with snatches here and there.

The musical ideas are original with Herbert Fromm and one yearns for some “Jewish” motives or phrases. On the other hand, the psalmody characteristic and chromatic progressions portray a style which is used in Jewish prayer, even though a kind of atonality is found throughout. An overwhelming quietude seems to hover, almost leading the total relaxation and possibly boredom. There is some reawakening in the **Adon Olam**. Fromm uses the soloist and choir alternately.

There is a question as to the practical use of this musical work, especially the requirement of an orchestra. Perhaps the work can be presented at mini-concert with other compositions programmed. **Ma'ariv** by Herbert Fromm looks very well on paper, however, music must be performed.

MORTON KULA

Morton Kula is the Hazzan of Adath Jeshurun Congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota.